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ABSTRACT

The objectives of a proposed high school course entitled Minority Literature II are to enable students to (1) become familiar with minority literature, (2) compare and contrast the works of the various minority group writers, and (3) determine which minority group writers are actively contributing to the American literary heritage. Students will be introduced to the principal minority groups of America through their reading of quality short stories by and about seven minority groups. Emphasis will be placed on Jewish and Black literature. (CK)

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Minority Literature
South Eugene High School
July 2, 1969

I. Rationale:

A study of minority literature has a two-fold purpose: (1) to acquaint the reader with the struggles, successes, and contributions of the various minority groups, (2) to give the minority writers, themselves, an opportunity to be heard.

Since many students have shown a great interest in Black Literature, this introductory, and experimental Minority Literature course will contain a greater percentage of readings by Afro-Americans than by other minority writer groups. All Americans have a right to know why thousands of their fellows are terribly angry. Black Literature can give insight into the Black Revolution.

Two developments in recent years have made such a course asthis possible. They are, to quote Robert Bone, Professor of English, Teachers College, Columbia University: "First, the emergence in recent years of a substantial body of good writing by American Negroes. And second, the determined assault by black students upon the racist practices that permeate our schools and universities, an assault which has produced a major crisis in American education. Without the good writing, we would have no professional concern. We might, as private citizens, support the Negro cause, but as teachers of American Literature, we would have no proper role. As it happens, however, this substantial body of good writing falls squarely within our jurisdiction. Furthermore it is we, and no one else, who have been responsible for its criminal neglect and its systematic exclusion from the curriculum."

"Discrimination in textbooks and library books leads almost automatically to discrimination in teaching, for few teachers have the time or inclination to hunt up materials that will counteract the evils of segregated textbooks." From Barbara Dodds, Vashon High School, St. Louis, Missouri, Negro Literature for High School Students, a National Council of Teachers of English pamphlet, 1969.

Ted Hipple writes in the English Journal, "Through Literature to Freedom," February 1966, page 189, "I am dissatisfied because I sense that we teachers, especially we teachers of English, are failing to instill in our students an understanding of the humanness and individuality of all people, including those with whom the students do not come into contact in their normal daily routines in the all-white high school in the all-white community. More specifically, I am bothered that some of my students, among them some of my brightest, have attitudes toward Negroes which are not consonant with the Judeo-Christian ethic, the Declaration of Independence, or even the law of the land assrevealed in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In a word, they are prejudiced. . . .There seems to be a prevailing attitude of superiority. And, if it is true that as the child goes, so goes the man, and if it is true that these students will influence their generation, then I must conclude that the freedom road for the Negro looms distantly and dimly in some far-off future."

Nancy Larrick, in her article, "The All-White World of Children's Books," Saturday Review, September 11, 1965, says, in connection with the false sense of security that the white child is given: "But the impact of all-white books upon 39,600,000 white children is probably even worse. Although his light skin makes him one of the world's minorities, the white child learns from his books that he is the kingfish. There seems little chance of developing the humility so urgently needed for world cooperation, instead of world conflict, as long as our children are brought up on gentle doses of racism through their books."

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I. Rationals: (continued)

Another minority group whose experience in some ways parallels that of the Afro-American is the Jewish one. Their ancient history of enslavement in Egypt, their expulsion from many European countries, the subsequent holocaust in Germany, their attempts to assimilate into American society, and the separate establishment of a Jewish state can serve as a comparison to the Black experience. Furthermore, the Jewish writers, like the Black ones, have been most prolific in the recent literary scene. Interest in both Jewish and Black writing is very high and a vast amount of good literature by both is now available.

II. Objectives:

A. To become familiar with some literature of the minority groups.
B. To identify the existing literary characteristics with their own cultures.
C. To be able to compare and contrast the works of the minority writers.
D. To determine which of these are actively contributing to the American literary heritage:
    1. Jew
    2. Afro-American
    3. Mexican-American
    4. Puerto-Rican
    5. Indian (American)
    6. Italian
    7. Irish
E. To list major problems which are dealt with within the literature.
F. To acknowledge the contributions of minority groups such as the Jews and the Afro-Americans in the artistic and esthetic life of our nation.
G. To read excerpts from literary criticisms by the Afro-American.
H. To be able to do research in depth on a self-chosen topic, and to present this research as a report to the class.
I. To enjoy literature written by and about minority groups.
J. To recognize the many ways that good writers describe violence without using objectionable language.

III. Scope:

When students think and are given something that affects their world, such as good literature by minority writers, they become involved. Involvement leads to better verbal and written self-expression. Prose and poetry will be read and discussed and evaluated. Since excellent publications are available, it will be up to the individual teacher and school to determine which ones will be used. An anthology, Black Voices (New American Library) edited by Abraham Chapman of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point is recommended by Professor Bone in the article found in the April, 1969, English Journal. About Black Voices, Bone said: "The level of taste is high, the range of selections is ample, and any high school teacher will find plenty of teachable material, if the need is for a single text."

This anthology will be used in the Minority Literature classes. Short stories from the collection by Richard Wright, Eight Men will be read and discussed in the classroom. Hopefully a poetry anthology will be made available. If not, for this introductory course, the poetry found in Black Voices will introduce the student to Afro-American poetry. Stories from The Magic Barrel, a collection by Bernard Malamud will introduce the readers to good Jewish literature. Excerpts, short stories and poetry by and about the other minority groups will be read in The Outnumbered (edited by Charlotte Brooks).

III. Scope: (continued)

Choice, number, and order of selections studied in this course are clearly dependent upon several variables. Two of these variables are: Level of capability and developmental level of achievement of individual students. More demanding or complex poetry, short stories, and novels should be studied by the abler readers, and other selections should be made available to slower students, with the same objectives in mind.

Students will be introduced to the principal minority groups of America through their reading of quality short stories by and about these seven minority groups. Then will follow literary works presenting the Jewish and Afro-American cultural similarities and differences. Emphasis will be placed on these two minority groups which have been literarily the most prolific in recent years.

IV. Sequence:

A. Discuss rationals of course
   1. Definition of minority groups and majority W.A.S.P.
   2. Explain course emphasis on Afro-American-Jewish literature and culture.
   3. Overview of course assignments.

B. Introduce principal minority groups by reading and analyzing short stories from The Outnumbered (edited by Charlotte Brooks)
   1. Indian--"Scars of Honor" and "The Indian Burying Ground"
   2. Puerto Rican--"The Land of Room Enough"
   3. Mexican-American
   4. Irish--"O'Halloran's Luck"
   5. Italian--"Panic"
   6. Afro-American--"The Cheerleaders" by John Steinbeck, "My Dungeon Shook" by James Baldwin, "Fate" by Richard Wright, "Shock" by Marian Anderson
   7. Jewish--"Angel Levine" by Bernard Malamud

C. Introduce Afro-American and Jewish minority groups by reading short stories from Eight Men by Richard Wright and from The Magic Barrel by Bernard Malamud.
   1. Jewish
      a. "The Mourners"
      b. "Take Pity"
      c. "The Prison" (Jewish Author's writing about an Italian family--how does another minority group's description compare?)
      d. "The Magic Barrel"
   2. Afro-American
      a. "The Man Who Was Almost a Man" (7-18)
      b. "The Man Who Lived Underground" (19-68)
      c. "The Man Who Saw the Flood" (82-87)
      d. "Man of All Work" (88-123)

Minority Literature

D. Introduction to the development of Afro-American literature in America, by reading the anthology entitled, Black Voices, edited by Abraham Chapman

1. Introduction
    a. Histroy of Black Americans
    b. Literary History 1760-1969
        (1) Folk literature of plantation South
        (2) Autobiographies and narratives by slaves
        (3) Narratives by leading Negroes in the anti-slavery movement
        (4) Protests against slavery and anti-slavery expository writing
        (5) Negro newspapers
        (6) Modern Period of literature
2. Fiction (by author)
    a. Charles W. Chestnutt "Baxter's Procrustee"
    b. Jean Toomer
        (1) Biographical sketch
        (2) Two selections from Cane--1923
    c. Rudolph Fisher "Common Meter"
    d. Arna Bontemps "A Summer Tragedy"
    e. Langston Hughes Tales of Simple "Feet Live their own Life", "Temptation", "Bop", "Census", "Coffee Break", "Cracker Prayer", "Promulgations"
    f. Richard Wright Eight Men--"The Man Who Lived Underground"
    g. Ann Petry--a novella, "In Darkness and Confusion"
    h. Ralph Ellison Prologue to Invisible Man (novel)
    i. Frank London Brown "McDougall"
    j. Paule Marshall--"To Da-duh, In Memoriam"
    k. Diane Oliver "Neighbors"
3. Autobiography
    a. Frederick Douglass
    b. James Weldon Johnson
    c. Richard Wright
    d. James Baldwin
    e. Arna Bontemps
    f. Malcolm X
    g. Stanley Sanders
4. Poetry
    a. Paul Laurence Dunbar
    b. W.E.B. DuBois
    c. James Weldon Johnson
    d. Fenton Johnson
    e. Claude McKay
    f. Jean Toomer
    g. Countee Cullen
    h. Melvin Tolson
    i. Frank Horne
    j. Sterling A Brown
    k. Arna Bontemps
    l. Langston Hughes
    m. Frank Marshall Davis
    n. Richard Wright
    o. Robert Hayden
    p. Owen Dodson
    q. Gwendolyn Brooks
    r. Dudley Randall
    s. Derone Bennett, Jr.
    t. Mari Evans
    u. Leroi Jones

5. Literary Criticism
   a. W.E.B. Dubois
   b. Alain Locke
   c. Richard Wright
   d. Sterling Brown
   e. James Baldwin
   f. Three papers from the First Conference of Negro Writers (1959)
      (1) Integration and Race Literature
      (2) The Negro Writer and His Relationship to His Roots
      (3) Writers: Black and White
   g. Blyden Jackson
   h. John Henrik Clarke
   i. Richard G. Stern
   j. Ean Gerogakas
   k. Sterling Studkey
   l. Darwin T. Turner
   m. George E. Kent
   n. Clarence Major

E. Novels--Rationale: Since there are many appropriate novels in print, and as was stated in Scope on page 3, the choice of selections will depend upon the capabilities of the various students. This guidance will be given by the individual teacher.

1. Cane by Jean Toomer is an unusual book, a series of vignettes and poems about life among Negroes in the South. It gives an impression like a photograph album of a trip. Although the themes are often of violence and oppression, the characters are built with sympathy and understanding. "By far the most impressive product of the Negro Renaissance, it ranks with Richard Wright's Native Son and Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man." Robert Bone, The Negro Novel in America.
2. Black Thunder by Arna Bontemps "would be an effective book for high school students. Gabriel, though primitive, was a powerful leader who commanded respect. Revolt, adventure, escape, and just a touch of romance make a high interest rating for adolescents. Although some may object to the justification of violence, the yearning for freedom is a theme all should respond to." Barbara Dodds, Negro Literature for High School Students.
3. Native Son by Richard Wright "is without doubt one of the important American novels of the period. It is also without question a book which teenagers could easily become involvedwith. However, it is also a very violent book with no attempt to hide sex, violent language, or hate.... mature students with good guidance would find the study very profitable." (all quotes from Barbara Dodds)
4. Black Boy is Wright's autobiography and is "one of the blackest accounts of the effects of poverty and prejudice on a child....he maintained a remarkable integrity, refusing to compromise his own worth. It is this integrity and courage that should make Black Boy an outstanding challenge for teenagers."
5. The Street by Ann Petry (1911) "is strong reading for high school students, but especially for many white students it could be educational." (those who believe that personal weaknesses cause poverty will obtain a more balanced view)

6. Go Tell It on the Mountain by James Baldwin, "the outstanding modern Negro writer and one of the outstanding modern American writers. The character development is excellent. The technique of using flashbacks to show each character's history and thoughts in the motion packed church service is very successful. The interest level is high, for there is continual action and a good build-up of suspense. Of Baldwin's novels this is probably the most appropriate for high school students."
7. A Different Drummer by William Melvin Kelly (1962) "tells how one day all the Negroes in a mythical Southern state repudiated their society and left. A Different Drummer is a remarkable book and a thought-provoking one. Instead of emphasizing racial conflict it deals with man's need to be a man. The writing is of very high quality, and character development is particularly outstanding. There is a strong sense of history that gives this book significance. It is an excellent book for high school students."
8. Sissie by John A. Williams "is of better than average literary quality. The book is rather depressing and includes some sex and violence, but on the whole, it has a positive approach, with the characters fighting to overcome their problems."
9. The Long Night by Julian Mayfield "is a powerful portrayal of Negro family life in the ghetto showing both strength and tragedy. The style reflects the simplicity of a ten-year-old boy, but the depth of a mature artist. In The Long Night, as in A Raisin in the Sun, the laboring love, the dead dreams, and the desperate struggle of a Negro family reach the universal problems of all men.
10. Herzog by Saul Bellow, is the story of a middle-aged Jewish intellectual, who undergoes continual crises in his life.
11. Magician of Lublin by Isaac Singer deals with ghetto life in Eastern Europe.
12. The Pawnbroker by E.L.Wallant is a story of an immigrant Nazi Jew, who is tormented by his past experiences in Nazi Germany.
13. The Assistant by Bernard Malamud is the story of the apprenticeship of Frank Alpine, a purposeless and confused drifter, to the discipline of Jewish suffering. Frank begins with a generalized need for discipline; apprentices himself, and ends by replacing his master. His suffering is very pure, and hopeless, and his master has tied himself to a grocery store. The Grocery Store is a constant reference of Malamud's fiction. ("The Prison," a short story uses the candy store as another example of a prison.)

V. Suggested Readings: (*--for the mature student)
(for students with guidance by teacher)

Bontemps, Arna, American Negro Poetry
Brooks, Charlotte, ed., The Outnumbered
Chapman, Abraham, ed., Black Voices
Emanuel, James A., Gross, Theodore L., ed., Dark Symphony
Hughes, Langston, The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers
Malamud, Bernard, The Magic Barrel
Malamud, Bernard, Idiot's First
Wright, Richard, Eight Men*

Novels: (Afro-American)
Baldwin, James, Go Tell It on the Mountain
Bontemps, Arna, Black Thunder
Kelly, William Melvin, A Different Drummer
Mayfield, Julian, The Long Night
Brown, Claude, Manchild in the Promised Land

Anthology: I've Got a Name
editor: Charlotte Brooks
(short excerpts--high interest)

Anthology: The Unfinished Journey by Oakes, Weiss, Jerry M.
(Stories of Immigration)

(Jewish)
Bellow, Saul, Herzog*
Malamud, Bernard, The Assistant
Singer, Isaac, Magician of Lublin
Wallan, E. L., The Pawnbroker*

Minority Literature

Petry, Ann, The Street
Toomer, Jean, Cane*
Williams, John, Sissie
Wright, Richard, Native Son*

(About Afro-Americans)

Griffin, Howard, Black Like Me
Paton, Alan, Cry the Beloved Country

Drama
Aleichem, Sholem, Fiddler on the Roof
Baldwin, James, The Amen Corner
Chayefsky, Paddy, The Tenth Man
Hansberry, Lorraine, A Raisin in the Sun
Hansberry, Lorraine, The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window
Locke, Alain, and Gregor , Montgomery, ed., Plays of Negro Life

Autobiography:
Gregory, Dick, Nigger
Hughes, Langston, The Big Sea
Robinson, James, Road Without Turning
Thomas, Will, The Seeking
X, Malcolm, Autobiography of Malcolm X

VI. Bibliography: (For teacher's use only)

Baldwin, James, Going to Meet the Man (N.Y., 1948)
Bennett, Lerone, The Negro Mood and Other Essays (N.Y., 1964)
Bone, Robert, The Negro Novel in America (New Haven, 1958)
Brown, Claude, Manchild in the Promised Land
Buckmaster, Henrietta, Flight to Freedom: The Story of the Underground Railroad (N.Y., 1958)
Emmanuel, James A. and Gross, Theodore, L., ed., Dark Symphony (N.Y., 1968)
Essien-Udom, E. U., Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America (N.Y., 1962)
Dodds, Barbara, Negro Literature for High School Students (Champaign 1968) NCTE
Gonzales, Juan and Quinn, Peter, Two Blocks Apart (N.Y., 1965)
Greene, Mary Frances and Ryan, Orietta, The Schoolchildren: Growing up in the Slums, (N.Y., 1964)
Hassan, Ihab, Radical Innocence: Studies in the Contemporary American Novel (N.Y., 1961)
Herndon, James, The Way it Spozed to Be (N.Y., 1965)
Hill, Herbert, Anger and Beyond: The Negro Writer in the United States (N.Y. 1966)
Hughes, Langston, The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers (Boston, 1967)
Jones, Leroi, The Dead Lecturer (N.Y., 1964)
Klein, Marcus, After Alienation: American Novels in Mid-Century (Cleveland, 1962)
Kohl, Herbert, 36 Children
Ladenburg, Thomas J. and McFeely, William S., The Black Man in the Land of Equality (N.Y., 1969)
Major, Clarence, ed., The New Black Poetry (N.Y., 1969)
Malin, Irving, Jews and Americans (Carbondale 1965)
Silberman, Charles E., Crisis in Black and White (N.Y., 1964)
Styron, William, The Confessions of Nat Turner (N.Y., 1966)
Williams, John A. The Man Who Cried I Am (N.Y., 1967)
Wright, Richard, Uncle Tom's Children (N.Y., 1936)

VI. Bibliography: (continued)

[illegible]e, Robert, "Negro Literature in the Secondary School: Problems and Perspectives" English Journal (58: 510-515) April, 1969.

Rollins, Charlemae, We Build Together: A Reader's Guide to Negro Life and Literature for Elementary and High School Use (Champaign, 1967) NCTE

The following are periodicals that are suggested for purchase by each school:

Negro Digest, Johnson Publishing Co. Chicago (This is a monthly publication, with articles, book reviews, biographies pertinent to the understanding of Afro-American literature).

Freedomways, Freedomways Associates, Inc. N.Y. (This is a quarterly publication, with timely articles for those teaching Afro-American literature courses).

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Minority Literature I
South Eugene High School
July 22, 1970
Jacque McWilliam

I. Rationale:

After eight Minority Literature courses were taught 1969-70, the English department felt the need, at the suggestion of interested students, for another minority literature course. Nine weeks was not enough time for all of the minorities! Seven weeks was given to Black literature and only two weeks was given to Jewish, Oriental, Indian, Hispanic, and European-American literature. Thus Minority Literature I was created, and Minority Literature II will encompass the Afro-American contributions.

Barbara Dodds, Vashon High School, St. Louis, Missouri is quoted in an NCTE pamphlet, Negro Literature for High School Students 1969, "Discrimination in textbooks, and library books leads almost automatically to discrimination in teaching, for few teachers have the time or inclination to hunt up materials that will counteract the evils of segregated textbooks."

Nancy Larrick, in her article, "The All-White World of Children's Books", Saturday Review, September 11, 1965, says, in connection with the false sense of security that the white child is given: "But the impact of all-white books upon 39,600,000 white children is probably even worse. Although his light skin makes him one of the world's minorities, the white child learns from his books that he is the kingfish. There seems little chance of developing the humility so urgently needed for world cooperation, instead of world conflict, as long as our children are brought up on gentle doses of racism through their books."

The textbook that will be used for this new course is an anthology entitled Speaking for Ourselves, edited by Lillian Faderman and Barbara Bradshaw. It was published in 1969, so it is very relevant to our times. The purpose of the book, to quote the editors, "is to introduce American writers of different ethnic backgrounds." They continue with the following explanation: "Most of the writers are contemporary artists; however, several selections have been translated from other languages, but most are written in the various regional and ethnic dialects." This anthology presents American writers of stories, poems, and plays from many different ethnic groups in a very systematic way so that their contributions can be evaluated in relation to those of authors held to be representative of the "American mainstream."

II. Objectives:

A. Literary
1. To be able to identify the theme of a particular story, poem, or play written by minority groups.
2. To be able to explicate a poem or poems found within the literature of minority groups.
3. To be able to compare and contrast the works of the minority writers.
4. To read excerpts from literary criticisms by these minority writers.
5. To be able to do research in depth ion a self-chosen topic, and to present this research as a report to the class.

Minority Literature I (continued)

II. Objectives: (continued)

B. Non-literary
1. To identify the existing literary characteristics with their own cultures.
2. To become familiar with literature of the minority groups other than Blacks.
3. To show some of the distinct problems that these minority groups have had adjusting to American life.
   a. Ghetto life
   b. Discomforts of poverty
   c. Diminished identities
   d. Alienation between generations within ethnic groups
4. To introduce selections that reveal what might be seen as an aspect of the "American Dream"
5. To list major problems which are dealt with within the literature.
6. To participate in an exchange program with children of other minorities.
7. To become familiar enough with classmates and teachers so that interesting and provocative discussions can be engaged in.
8. To listen and appreciate the viewpoints of outside speakers.
9. To get involved with the production of plays by minority writers.
10. To determine which of these are actively contributing to the American literary heritage:
    a. Oriental American writers
    b. Histanic American writers
    c. Jewish American writers
    d. Indian American writers
    e. European American and Near Eastern American writers
11. To enjoy literature written by and about minority groups.
12. To attend class regularly, since involvement of individuals is so important to this class.

III. Scope:

When students are presented with new and relevant material and then are able to see their total involvement in the minority problem that exists today, they learn. They want to learn. Involvement by students leads to better verbal and written self-expression. Prose, poetry, and drama will be read and discussed and evaluated. Excellent current publications are available. Speaking for Ourselves, a college anthology, has "Suggestions for Discussion" following each excerpt. These "are designed to aid students of varying levels in careful analytical reading." The "Suggestions for Writing and Comparison" are more difficult and will be used as a basis for essays by students when the instructor wishes to deal with the work as an entity and relate to other works of literature.

Excerpts, short stories and poetry by and about the minorities will be read in the book, The Outnumbered, edited by Charlotte Brooks. The Unfinished Journey, a book edited by Theresa Oakes and Jerry M. Weiss contains stories, plays and excerpts about the migration of the minorities.

Choice, number, and order of selections studied in this course are clearly dependent upon several variables. Two of these variables are: Level of capability and developmental level of achievement of individual students. More demanding or complex poetry, short stories, and novels will be studied by the abler readers, and other selections will be made available to slower students, with the same objectives in mind.

Minority Literature 025

IV. Sequence:

A. Discuss the rationals of course
   1. Definition of minority groups
   2. Explanation of elimination of WASPNN literature (even though they are of the greatest minority group)
   3. Explanation of the need of the formation of this course
B. Give Diagnostic Test
   1. Shows knowledge of student at time of introduction
   2. Gives opportunity to see gain by end of nine weeks
C. Introduce principal minority groups
D. Introduce text Speaking for Ourselves
   1. Examine Table of Contents
   2. Read Foreword to class (explain "Peach Blossom" selections throughout the book)
   3. Explain the elimination of Black minority literature
E. Introduction to the different cultural backgrounds of the fine minority groups by reading the anthology, Speaking for Ourselves
   1. Oriental American Writers 119-239
      a. Introduction
      b. Short stories
      c. Poetry
      d. Community
      e. Peach Blossoms
      f. Novels
   2. Hispanic American Writers 239-319
      a. Introduction
      b. Short stories
      c. Poetry
      d. God and Peach Blossoms
      e. Novels
   3. Jewish American Writers
      a. Introduction
      b. Stories
      c. Poetry
      d. The Biblical Tradition
      e. The Community
      f. God and Peach Blossoms
      g. A Play
      h. Novels
   4. Indian American Writers
      a. Introduction
      b. Stories
      c. Poetry
      d. God and Peach Blossoms
      e. Novels
   5. European American and Near-Eastern American Writers
      a. Introduction
      b. Stories
      c. Poetry
      d. Heritage and Tradition
      e. God and Peach Blossoms
      f. Novels

Minority Literature 025

V. Suggested Readings: Since there are many appropriate novels in print, and was stated in Scope on page 2, the choice of selections will depend upon the capabilities of the various students. This guidance will be given by the individual teacher, and will necessarily depend upon the availability of books and the number of classes taught at one time.

The list of books mentioned in each of the sections in the anthology, Speaking for Ourselves, is an excellent guide for teacher and pupil. The short resume of each novel is useful to both parties.

The following is a list of books that are available to students at South Eugene High School for the school year 1970-71, with more added continually. These are in numbers of 10 or more.

The Assistant	Malamud, Bernard
The Chosen	Potok, Chaim
The Promised	Potok, Chaim
Herzog	Bellow, Saul
The Pawnbreaker	Wallant, E. L.

Indian American

The Inland Whale, Kroeber
House Made of Dawn, Momaday, N. Scott
People of the Valley, Waters, Frank
American Indian Prose and Poetry, Astnov
Custer Died for Your Sins, Deloria, Vine (An Indian Manifesto) 1969
My Life as an Indian, Schultz
The Way to Rainy Mountain, Momaday, N. Scott
The Man Who Killed the Deer, Waters, Frank

European American and Near Eastern American

Names like John Ciardi, Gregory Corso, Frank O'Hara, and Mae Swenson, are familiar to the students because of the poetry courses, short story classes and world literature that they have been introduced to. The school library contains many books that will be appropriate for this section.

After teaching thiscourse for a semester or year, the instructors will be able to evaluate the necessity for ordering additional books, or reordering more of the same.

Course Number: 026

Course Title: Minority Literature II.

Revised from original written by Jacque McWilliam
South Eugene High School
July 20, 1970

I. Rationale:

A study of Minority Literature II, has a two-fold purpose: (1) to acquaint the reader with the struggles, successes, and contributions of the various minority groups, (2) to give the Black writers, themselves, an opportunity to be heard.

Since many students have shown a great interest in Black Literature, this experimental Minority Literature II, course will contain readings by Afro-American writer groups. All Americans have a right to know why thousands of their fellows are terribly angry. Black Literature can give insight into the Black Revolution.

Two developments in recent years have made such a course as this possible. They are, to quote Robert Bone, Professor of English, Teachers College, Columbia University: "First, the emergence in recent years of a substantial body of good writing by American Negroes. And second, the determined assault by black students upon the racist practices that permeate our schools and universities, an assault which has produced a major crisis in American education. Without the good writing, we would have no professional concern. We might, as private citizens, support the Negro cause, but as teachers of American Literature, we would have no porper role. As it happens, however, this substantial body of good writing falls squarely within our jurisdiction. Furthermore, it is we, and no one else, who have been responsible for its criminal neglect and its systematic exclusion from the curriculum."

"Discrimination in textbooks and library books leads almost automatically to discrimination in teaching, for few teachers have the time or inclination to hunt up materials that will counteract the evils of segregated textbooks." From Barbara Dodds, Vashon High School, St. Louis, Missouri, Negro Literature for High School Students, a National Council of Teachers of English pamphlet, 1969.

Ted Hipple writes in the English Journal, "Through Literature to Freedom," February 1966, page 189, "I am dissatisfied because I sense that we teachers, especially we teachers of English, are failing to instill in our students an understanding of the Humanness and individuality of all people, including those with whom the students do not come into contact in their normal daily routines in the all-white high school, in the all-white community. More specifically, I am bothered that some of my students, among them some of my brightest, have attitudes toward Negroes which are not consonant with the Judeo-Christian ethic, the Declaration of Independence, or even the law of the land as revealed in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In a word, they are prejudiced....There seems to be a prevailing attitude of superiority. And, if it is true that as the child goes, so goes the man, and if it is true that these students will influence their generation, then I must conclude that the freedom road for the Negro looms distantly and dimly in some far-off future."

MINORITY LITERATURE II.

1. Rationale: (continued)

Nancy Larrick, in her article, "The All-White World of Children's Books," Saturday Review, September 11, 1965, says, in connection with the false sense of security that the white child is given: "But the impact of all-white books upon 39,600,000 white children is probably even worse. Although his light skin makes him one of the world's minorities, the white child learns from his books that he is the kingfish. There seems little chance of developing the humility so urgently needed for world cooperation, instead of world conflict, as long as our children are brought up on gentle doses of racism through their books."

II. Objectives:

A. To become familiar with literature of the Afro-American writers.

B. To identify the existing literary characteristics with their own culture.

C. To be able to compare and contrast the works of the minority writers.

D. To list major problems which are dealt with within the literature.

E. To acknowledge the contributions of the Afro-Americans in the artistic and esthetic life of our nation.

F. To read excerpts from literary criticisms by the Afro-American.

G. To be able to do research in depth on a self-chosen topic, and to present this research as a report to the class.

H. To enjoy literature written by and about Blacks.

I. To recognize the many ways that good writers describe violence without using objectionable language.

III. Scope:

When students think and are given something that affects their world, such as good literature by minority writers, they become involved. Involvement leads to better verbal and written self-expression. Prose and poetry will be read and discussed and evaluated. Since excellent publications are available, it will be up to the individual teacher and school to determine which ones will be used. An anthology, Black Voices, (New American Library) edited by Abraham Chapman of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point is recommended by Professor Bone in the article found in the April, 1969, English Journal. About Black Voices, Bone said: "The level of taste is high, the range of selections is ample, and any high school teacher will find plenty of teachable material, if the need is for a single text."

MINORITY LITERATURE II.

III. Scope: (continued)

This anthology will be used in the Minority Literature II. classes. Short stories from the collection by Richard Wright, Eight Men, will be read and discussed in the classroom.

Choice, number, and order of selections studied in this course are clearly dependent upon several variables. Two of these variables are: Level of capability and developmental level of achievement of individual students. More demanding or complex poetry, short stories, and novels should be studied by the abler readers, and other selections should be made available to slower student, with the same objectives in mind.

IV. Sequence:

A. Discuss rationale of course

1. Definition of minority groups and majority W.A.S.P.

2. Explain emphasis on Afro-American literature and culture.

3. Overview of course assignments

B. Introduction to short stories by Blacks, by reading The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers, Edited by Langston Hughes

C. Introduction to the development of Afro-American Literature in America, by reading the anthology entitled, Black Voices, edited by Abraham Chapman.

1. Introduction

a. History of Black Americans

b. Literary History 1760-1969

(1) Folk literature of plantation South

(2) Autobiographies and narratives by slaves

(3) Narratives by leading Negroes in the anti-slavery movement

(4) Protests against slavery and anti-slavery expository writing

(5) Negro newspapers

(6) Modern period of literature

MINORITY LITERATURE II.

IV. Sequence: (continued)

2. Fiction (by author)

a. Charles W. Chestnutt "Baster's Procrustes"

b. Jean Toomer

(1) Biographical sketch

(2) Two selections from Cane--1923

c. Rudolph Fisher "Common Meter"

d. Arna Bontemps "A Summer Tragedy"

e. Langston Hughes Tales of Simple "Feet Live their own Life," "Temptation", "Bop", "Census", "Coffee Break", "Cracker Prayer", "Promulgations"

f. Richard Wright Eight Men--"The Man Who Lived Underground"

g. Ann Petry--a novella, "In Darkness and Confusion"

h. Ralph Ellison Prologue to Invisible Man (novel)

i. Frank London Brown "McDougal"

j. Paule Marshall--"To Da-duh, In Memoriam"

k. Diane Oliver "Neighbors"

3. Autobiography

a. Frederick Douglass

b. James Weldon Johnson

c. Richard Wright

d. James Baldwin

e. Arna Bontemps

f. Malcolm X

g. Stanley Sanders

4. Poetry

a. Paul Laurence Dunbar

b. W. E. B. DuBois

MINORITY LITERATURE II.

IV. Sequence: (continued)

4. Poetry (continued)

c. James Weldon Johnson

d. Fenton Johnson

e. Claude McKay

f. Jean Toomer

g. Countee Cullen

h. Melvin Tolson

i. Frank Horne

j. Sterling A. Brown

k. Arna Bontemps

l. Langston Hughes

m. Frank Marshall Davis

n. Richard Wright

o. Robert Hayden

p. Owen Dodson

q. Gwendolyn Brooks

r. Dudley Randall

s. Derone Bennett, Jr.

t. Mari Evans

u. Leroi Jones

5. Literary Criticism

a. W. E. B. DuBois

b. Alain Locke

c. Richard Wright

MINORITY LITERATURE II.

IV. Sequence: (continued)

5. Literary Criticism (continued)

d. Sterling Brown

e. James Baldwin

f. Three papers from the First Conference of Negro Writers (1959)

(1) Integration and Race Literature

(2) The Negro Writer and His Relationship to His Roots

(3) Writers: Black and White

g. Blyden Jackson

h. John Henrik Clarke

i. Dan Gerogakas

j. Richard G. Stern

k. Sterling Stuckey

l. Darwin T. Turner

m. George E. Kent

n. Clarence Major

D. Novels--Rationale: Since there are many appropriate novels in print, and as was stated in Scope on page 2 and 3, the choice of selections will depend upon the capabilities of the various students. This guidance will be given by the individual teacher.

1. Cane by Jean Toomer is an unusual book, a series of vignettes and poems about life among Negroes in the South. It gives an impression like a photograph album of a trip. Although the themes are often of violence and oppression, the characters are built with sympathy and understanding. "By far the most impressive product of the Negro Renaissance, it ranks with Richard Wright's Native Son and Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man." Robert Bone, The Negro Novel in America.

2. Black Thunder by Arna Bontemps "would be an effective book for high school students. Gabriel, though primitive, was a powerful leader who commanded respect. Revolt, adventure, escape, and just a touch of romance make a high interest rating for adolescents. Although some may object to the justification of violence, the yearning for freedom is a theme all should respond to." Barbara Dodds, Negro Literature for High School Students.

MINORITY LITERATURE II.

IV. Sequence: (continued)

3. Native Son by Richard Wright "is without doubt one of the important American novels of the period. It is also without question a book which teenagers could easily become involved with. However, it is also a very violent book with no attempt to hide sex, violent language, or hate. . . mature students with good guidance would find the study very profitable." (all quotes from Barbara Dodds)

4. Black Boy is Wright's autobiography and is "one of the bleakest accounts of the effects of poverty and prejudice on a child....he maintained a remarkable integrity, refusing to compromise his own worth. It is this integrity and courage that should make Black Boy an outstanding challenge for teenagers."

5. The Street by Ann Petry (1911) "is strong reading for high school students, but especially for many white students it could be educational." (those who believe that personal weaknesses cause poverty will obtain a more balanced view)

6. Go Tell It on the Mountain by James Baldwin, "the outstanding modern Negro writer and one of the outstanding modern American writers. The character development is excellent. The technique of using flashbacks to show each character's history and thoughts in the emotion packed church service is very successful. The interest level is high, for there is continual action and a good build-up of suspense. Of Baldwin's novels this is probably the most appropriate for high school students.

7. A Different Drummer by William Melvin Kelly (1962) "tells how one day all the Negroes in a mythical Southern state repudiated their society and left. A Different Drummer is a remarkable book and a thought-provoking one. Instead of emphasizing racial conflict it deals with man's need to be a man. The writing is of very high quality, and character development is particularly outstanding. There is a strong sense of history that gives this book significance. It is an excellent book for high school students."

8. Sissie by John A. Williams "is of better than average literary quality. The book is rather depressing and includes some sex and violence, but on the whole, it has a positive approach, with the characters fighting to overcome their problems."

9. The Long Night by Julian Mayfield "is a powerful portrayal of Negro family life in the ghetto showing both strength and tragedy. The style reflects the simplicity of a ten-year-old boy, but the depth of a mature artist. In The Long Night, as in A Raisin in the Sun, the laboring love, the dead dreams, and the desperate struggle of a Negro family feach the universal problems of all men."

MINORITY LITERATURE II.

V. Suggested Readings:

*Bontemps, Arna, American Negro Poetry
Brooks, Charlette, ed., The Outnumbered
Chapman, Abraham, ed., Black Voices
Emanuel, James A., Gross, Theodore L., ed., Dark Symphony
Hughes, Langston, The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers
*Wright, Richard Eight Men

Anthology: I've Got a Name
Editor: Charlotte Brooks
(Short excerpts--high interest)

Anthology: The Unfinished Journey
by Oakes, Teresa and Weiss, Jerry M. (Stories of Immigration)

Novels: (Afro-American)

Baldwin, James, Go Tell It on the Mountain
Bontemps, Arna, Black Thunder
Kelly, William Melvin, A Different Drummer
Mayfield, Julian, The Long Night
*Brown, Claude, Manchild in the Promised Land
Petry, Ann, The Street
Toomer, Jean, Cane
Williams, John, Sissie
Wright, Richard, Native Son

(About Afro-Americans)

Griffin, Howard, Black Like Me
Paton, Alan, Cry the Beloved Country

Drama:

Baldwin, James, The Amen Corner
Hansberry, Lorraine, A Raisin in the Sun
Hansberry, Lorraine, The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window
Locke, Alain, and Gregory, Montgomery, ed., Plays of Negro Life

Autobiography:

Gregory, Dick, Nigger
Hughes, Langston, The Big Sea
Robinson, James, Road Without Turning
Thomas, Will, The Seeking
X, Malcolm, Autobiography of Malcolm X

VI. Bibliography:

Baldwin, James, Going to Meet the Man (N.Y., 1948)
Bennett, Lerone, The Negro Mood and Other Essays)N.Y., 1964)
*Bone, Robert, The Negro Novel in America (New Haven, 1958)

*For the mature student--for students with guidance by teacher

MINORITY LITERATURE II.

VI. Bibliography: (continued)

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Essien-Udom, E. U., Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America (N.Y., 1962)
Dodds, Barbara, Negro Literature for High School Students (Champaign, 1968) NCTE
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*Herndon, James, The Way it Spozed to Be (N.Y., 1965)
*Hill, Herbert, Anger and Beyond: The Negro Writer in the United States (N.Y., 1966)
*Hughes, Langston, The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers (Boston, 1967)
Jones,Leroi, The Dead Lecturer (N.Y. 1964).
Klein, Marcus, After Alienation: American Novels in Mid-Centry (Cleveland 1962).
Kohl, Herbert, 36 Children
Ladenburg, Thomas J. and McFeely, William S., The Black Man in the Land of Equality (N.Y. 1969).
Major, Clarence, Ed., The New Black Poetry (N.Y. 1969).
Silberman, Charles E. Crisis in Black and White (N.Y. 1964).
Styron, William, The Confessions of Nat Turner (N.Y. 1966).
Williams, John A., The Man Who Cried I am (N.Y. 1967).
Wright, Richard, Uncle Tom's Children (N.Y. 1936).
Bone, Robert, "Negro Literature in the Secondary School: Problems and Perspectives" English Journal (58: 510-515) April, 1969.
Rollins, Charlemae, We Build Together: A Reader's Guide to Negro Life and Literature for Elementary and High School Use. (Champaign, 1967)

The following are periodicals that were purchased by the schools:

Negro Digest, nowwcalled Black World, Johnson Publishing Co. Chicago (This is a monthly publication, with articles, book reviews, biographies pertinent to the understanding of Afro-American Literature.)

Freedomways, Freedomways Associates, Inc. N.Y. (This is a quarterly publication, with timely articles for those teaching Afro-American Literature courses.

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*Copies of 5 or more at South Eugene High School.